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canon was acted on in England until the year 1170. The restoring of this ancient canon did much for our "Protestant constitution."

II. The Roman Emperors, under the civil law, exercised the power of calling general councils of the Church; this is the foundation of the first paragraph of the 21st of the 39 articles. The restoring of this ancient power of the Crown was a great help to our "Protestant constitution."

III. "King Alfred was the father of the common law; and a Catholic confessor, Edward, was its restorer." Right well said by the *Tablet*; and from the common law as restored by "Edward the confessor," we give the answer:—"The king, who is the vicar of the Most High King, is constituted for this, that he should govern his earthly kingdom, and the people of the Lord; and that, above all, he should venerate his holy Church, AND RULE IT." This is the foundation of the 37th of the thirty-nine articles:—"The king's majesty hath the chief power in England, and other of his dominions, unto whom the chief government of all estates of this realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in all causes, doth appertain."

Thus the supremacy of the Crown, which is the key-stone of "our Protestant constitution," rests on the restoration of the common law, as "restored" by "Saint Edward the confessor."

IV. The *Tablet* seems to think that all statutes against the Pope were made by "Protestants." We take our answer here from a statute made in the Parliament of King Richard II., 150 years before the Reformation (16 Richard II., ch. 5)—"Whereas, the commons of the realm in this present parliament have showed to our redoubted lord, the King, grievously complaining, that whereas the said our lord the King, and all his liege people, ought of right, and of old time were wont, to sue in the King's Courts to recover their presentments to churches, &c. . . . And when judgments shall be given in the same court, on such a plea and presentment, the archbishops, bishops, &c., . . . be bound and have made execution of such judgments . . . and also be bound of right to make execution of many other of the King's commandments; of which right the Crown of England hath been peaceably seized (possessed), as well in the time of our said lord the King that now is, as in the time of all his progenitors to this day; but now of late divers processes be made BY THE BISHOP OF ROME, and censures of excommunication upon certain bishops of England, because they have made execution of such commandments, to the open disherison of the said Crown, and destruction of the regality of our said lord the king, his law, and all his realm, if remedy be not provided. And, also, it is said, and a common clamour is made, that THE SAID BISHOP OF ROME hath ordained and purposed to translate some prelates of the same realm, some out of the realm, and some from one bishopric into another within the same realm, WITHOUT THE KING'S ASSENT AND KNOWLEDGE . . . by which translation, if they should be suffered, the statutes of the realm should be defeated and made void . . . and so the Crown of England, which hath been so free at all times that it hath been in no earthly subjection, but immediately subject to God in all things touching the regality of the same Crown, and to none other, should be SUBMITTED TO THE POPE, and the laws and statutes of the realm by him defeated and avoided (made void) at his will, in perpetual destruction of the sovereignty of the King our lord, his crown, his regality, and of all his realm, WHICH GOD DEFEND . . . Wherefore they, and all the liege commons of the same realm, will stand with our said lord the King, and his said crown, and his regality in the cases aforesaid, and in all other cases attempted against him, his crown, and his regality in all points, TO LIVE AND TO DIE."

The Commons then ask the King to inquire the opinion of the Lords SPIRITUAL and temporal, whose answers are given in the act:—"Whereupon the Lords temporal, so demanded, have answered, every one by himself, that the cases aforesaid be clearly in derogation of the King's crown, and of his regality, as it is well known, and hath been of a long time known; and that they will be with the same crown and regality in these cases specially, and in all other cases which shall be attempted against the same crown and regality in all points, with all their power." And the archbishops and bishops answered, "that the same is against the King and his crown, as it is contained in the petition before named . . . and that the said Lords spiritual will, AND OUGHT TO BE, with the King in these cases, in lawfully maintaining his crown, and in all other cases touching his crown and regality, as they be bound by their ligance."

Whereupon it was enacted by the Commons, the Peers, and the Bishops, that all who should support these usurpations of the Bishop of Rome against the King and the law should be put out of the King's protection and imprisoned.

By all which it appears that the Acts of Parliament made at the Reformation did but RESTORE—

1. The ancient canons of the Church;
2. The ancient power of the Roman Emperors;
3. The ancient Common Law;
4. The ancient Statutes of England.

We trust we have fairly answered the very proper question of the *Tablet*—"How our constitution became Protestant."

HORAE JUVENILES.

We have to thank a friend for forwarding to us a copy of an unassuming little work with the above title, published in a very creditable style by J. Roche, of Cork, being a collection of pieces in prose and verse, by Denis Donovan, written with a delicacy of taste and piety of spirit which seem to us to give much promise of future usefulness. It is not usual with us to notice works merely for their literary merit in our columns, however we may admire the talent displayed in them, nor should we do so now, but for the notes appended to one of the poetical pieces entitled, "A Litany of the Blessed Virgin," in which the writer has evidently been misled himself, and may be the means of misleading others, if uncorrected, into supposing the *Discourse on the Annunciation*, erroneously attributed to St. Athanasius, to be a genuine composition of that celebrated champion of the faith. Should these observations happen to meet the eye of Mr. Donovan, we beg to call his attention to the indisputable fact, that the discourse or homily on the *Annunciation* (*Sermo in Annuntiationem Sanctissimae Dominae nostrae Deiparae*), printed in the 2nd volume of the Benedictine Edition of St. Athanasius's works, p. 401 (from which Mr. Donovan cites it), has for the last 250 years been pronounced by the highest Roman Catholic authorities to be indisputably spurious, and not to have been written for 300 years at least after Athanasius's death. We need only mention that Cardinal Bellarmine and Cardinal Baronius were both of this opinion, as were the Benedictine Editors, who, in their preface expressly say "that this discourse is spurious, there is no learned man who does not now adjudge." We cannot, however, be surprised that so young and pious a Roman Catholic as Mr. Donovan appears to be should have been misled in this matter, when so eminent a writer as Cardinal Wiseman, in his Lectures, vol. ii., p. 108, was so reckless as to cite the same words as those of St. Athanasius, out of the very Benedictine edition which condemns them as spurious; as our readers may remember we have already fully detailed in our 3rd volume, p. 84.

Mr. Donovan's other extract (from St. Epiphanius) is one which never can be too often quoted, and which every member of the Anglican Church would cordially respond to, "Let Mary be honored; let the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost alone be adored. Let no one worship Mary;" a passage which we have more than once cited and relied on in our pages.

Mr. Donovan concludes by saying that "passages might be quoted from the Scriptures in support of this doctrine of the Church, viz.: the invocation of the Blessed Virgin), but I refrain from doing so, as well, because I do not consider this the place to enter more fully into the subject, as because such arguments are already well known to all my Catholic readers."

Should Mr. Donovan further elucidate his views by citations from the Holy Scriptures, we hope our friend will not fail to furnish us with a copy, and we should be happy to facilitate their circulation by inserting in our pages anything written in support of them, in so Christian and amiable a spirit as pervades the whole of the little volume above referred to.

Correspondence.

DID THE VIRGIN MARY EVER DIE?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR,—The late decree of Pope Pius IX., that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin should be henceforth believed as one of the fundamental dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church, has already begun to produce its fruits. Some days ago I happened to meet with a passage in a modern French periodical publication (the *Revue Chretienne*) which may prove interesting to some of your readers. In this passage the writer makes the following statement:—

"We lately read a letter written by the Abbé Migne, requesting of the Pope to reform the liturgy of the Feast of the Assumption, and to blot out of it everything relating to the death of Mary, because it was impossible that the Immaculate Virgin could have undergone the consequences of original sin."

The Abbé Migne, I may observe, is one of the most learned of the French Roman Catholic theologians, and his name is in the title page as the editor of the re-publication of the works of the Fathers, which has lately issued from the French press. That a man so able and so well informed should feel himself compelled to take the step of solemnly asking the Pope to change the old established liturgical forms which have now been in use for many centuries in the Church of Rome—a Church which boasts that she is immutable and unchangeable—is indeed an event of no ordinary significance, and, if complied with, may be attended with very important consequences.

For what is the motive which must have induced the Abbé Migne to make so strange and unusual a request? It is plain that he sees that the Church of Rome cannot

"Nous avons lu l'autre jour une lettre de l'Abbé Migne, qui demande au Pape que l'on réforme la liturgie de la fête de l'Assomption, et que l'on efface tout ce qui se rapporte à la mort de Marie, car la Vierge immaculée n'a pu subir les conséquences du péché original.—Revue Chretienne. No. 1. Janvier, 1856. Paris."

stop where she is. He is sufficiently versed in the early Fathers to know, that, following the guidance of Scripture, they uniformly assert, that *death is the penalty of sin*. The Romish Church, in the Liturgy of the Assumption, teaches her people to believe that the Blessed Virgin died, like ordinary descendants of Adam. Hence the obvious inference in the minds of all persons would be, that the Virgin must have sinned. But the Pope has lately issued his decree that the Blessed Virgin is free, not only from actual, but from original sin. Why, then, every one will naturally ask, why did she die?

In such a state of things, it is plain to common sense, that one or other of two things must be done—either the new doctrine must be given up, as being contrary to the old liturgy; or the old liturgy must be changed, in order to make it accord with the new doctrine. In fact, the case is much the same as if a man were to build an addition to the house in which his forefathers had lived before him for several generations, and then, when the addition was completed, should find to his surprise that the new building had blocked up some of the doors and windows which were in constant use in the old house. It is plain that the owner of the house would have to make his choice between two alternatives, either to give up the use of the doors and windows, which had been made before his own time, or to pull down the building which he had erected, perhaps, at the cost of much toil and money.

Now, it cannot be expected that the Pope and his advisers would ever think of repealing a dogmatical decree which they issued with so much pomp a year ago; even if it could be ever so clearly shown to be inconsistent with the old established Liturgies of the Romish Church. Hence, the only thing to be done is, to alter the liturgy so as to correspond with the new dogma, and this is what the Abbé Migne has asked the Pope to do.

It would occupy too much of your space if I were to dwell at any length upon all the grave consequences involved in this request. The Abbé Migne sees that an important fact in the history of the Blessed Virgin, namely, her death, is inconsistent with the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and he, therefore, naturally desires that all reference to this fact should be blotted out of the Liturgy of the Feast of the Assumption. But, even if the request of the learned Abbé should be complied with, will the Church of Rome have gained her object? She may blot out of the Liturgy of the Assumption all reference to the death of the Blessed Virgin, but will she be able to blot the *fact itself* out of the records of history? She has the power, doubtless, to keep back from the knowledge of a great part of her people this cardinal event in the Virgin's history; but what is this, but to acknowledge that she is *afraid* to tell them of an event that really happened, lest it should induce them to disbelieve a doctrine which she has thought fit to decree as one of the articles of the Christian faith? Is this, I would ask, either fair or honest on the part of Romish theologians?

In fact, if the suggestion of the Abbé Migne should be complied with, what would be the next step? The existing facts of history will not fit in with the dogmas of Romanism. They must be shut out of sight, therefore, altogether; and perhaps a new history of the Blessed Virgin will be written, which will accord better with Romish ideas of what "the glory of Mary" requires. When the opinion of the Abbé Migne is adopted, as it very probably will be, by thousands in the Roman Catholic Church, it will be decreed by the Pope and his advisers, and whoever denies it will be deemed a heretic! Such is the downward tendency which Romish theology has lately assumed!

I will conclude this letter (the length of which I hope you will excuse) by requesting that you will favour your readers with a collection of those passages of ancient authors, which explicitly state or confirm the fact of the actual death of the Virgin. I am sure that such a citation of passages would prove very acceptable to some, at least, of your readers, and we would then be able to see what portions of old authors would have to be inserted in the the next edition of the *Index Romanus Expurgatorius*, when dogmas respecting the Blessed Virgin shall have ripened into full maturity.—I remain, sir, your faithful servant,

INVESTIGATOR.

[We beg to thank our correspondent for his interesting communication, and hope to take an early opportunity of complying with the request he has made.]

THE HYMN OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

MR. EDITOR,—A few days ago, as I was sitting in a friend's house, the reader walked in, and after a little time began to prove that it was contrary to the will and mind of God to pray to the Blessed Virgin, or to any other saint or angel in heaven. "Arrah, hold your tongue, man," says Ned Casey, "and don't be making a fool of yourself; sure if your own mother axed a request of you, wouldn't you grant it? and no one would refuse his mother; therefore," says he, "Jesus Christ doesn't refuse his blessed mother for any request she axes of him." "I fear," says the reader, "that you draw your conclusion too hastily; for you have compared your own feelings and affections with the ways of Almighty God. I will read for you," says he, "from your own Bible (the Douay) what one of the prophets says on this subject; so he read,—"For my thoughts are not your thoughts;